

Unit-2

Functional Listening skills and Reading Skills & Functional English

Listening involves identifying the sounds of speech and processing them into words and sentences. When we listen, we use our ears to receive individual sounds (letters, stress, rhythm and pauses) and we use our brain to convert these into messages that mean something to us.

Listening in any language requires focus and attention. It is a skill that some people need to work at harder than others. People who have difficulty concentrating are typically poor listeners. Listening in a second language requires even greater focus.

To become a fluent speaker in English, you need to develop strong listening skills. Listening not only helps you understand what people are saying to you. It also helps you to speak clearly to other people. It helps you learn how to pronounce words properly, how to use intonation, and where to place stress in words and sentences.

Differences between hearing and listening

Hearing is simply the physical act of sound waves entering our ears and being transported to our brain. This is a passive process that requires no effort. No meaning is attached. If your ears work and you are in a place where sound is being transmitted, you will hear it. Listening is an active skill. It requires effort, and you can choose not to do it. Listeners take sounds and attach meanings to them. If they comprehend what a speaker has said, they can interpret and respond to the message. This is called active listening.

10 Tips to be a good listener

- Try to be still as you are listening.
- Try to ignore distractions.
- Make eye contact with the speaker.
- Try to pinpoint the point of view of the speaker.
- Try not to daydream. Refocus when you catch yourself thinking about something else.
- Try not to think about what you are going to say next when another person is talking. Concentrate on the speaker.
- Observe body language (including your own).
- Learn how to paraphrase what you have heard.
- Learn how to ask for clarification if you don't understand. Don't pretend to understand.
- Avoid interrupting (unless you are practising how to interrupt politely). Take notes if it is not distracting to the speaker.

Listening strategies

- Practise listening for the gist or main purpose.
- Reduce listening barriers.
- Listen for specific details such as problems.
- Listen for speaker bias.
- Make assumptions and predictions.
- Listen to many different accents.
- Listen with noise in the background. Learn to “tune out” other sounds.
- If you ask a question, listen for the answer.
- Practise summarizing and paraphrasing.
- Ask questions you think you know the answer to.
- Recognize pauses and false starts.
- Create your own questions

Three Levels of Listening

Dynamic Listening is the most refined and often the most productive level of listening because it empowers the other to problem solve for them. Dynamic Listeners create space for potential to emerge and provide opportunity for the other’s strengths to solidify.

The other relates their issue, predicament, or emotional wound.

Then the Dynamic Listener (you) asks a relevant question. For example, *“How did that make you feel?” “What happened then?” Etc.*

Then you listen.

Then the other replies to your question and speaks some more. You listen and ask another pertinent question.

Then you listen again.

Then the other replies. You listen and ask a question. And you listen some more.

Then the other speaks. You listen and ask a question.

Then you listen some more.

If you have an idea or helpful thought, you package it as a question, ask it succinctly, and then listen.

Then the other speaks. You listen and ask a question. Then you listen some more.

And so on.

Dynamic Listening, sometimes referred to as Active Listening, requires more maturity and intellectual complexity on the part of the listener. Dynamic Listening takes discipline because you must put yourself aside, let go of control, trust the other’s ability to problem solve, and

create space for potential and essence to emerge. Above all, you must be able to consider that there are truths other than your own.

Dynamic Listening says, *“I care about what you’re experiencing, and I am willing to create the space for you to formulate a solution that works best for you.”* Dynamic Listening says, *“I trust you to know your world better than I do, and I trust you to problem solve.”*

When you practice Dynamic Listening, you may feel yourself having to hold back, keep your mouth shut, and allow the other time to struggle with an issue. When you do this, you are practicing “Silent” Dynamic Listening. This is often the highest form of listening because you’re creating space for the other’s mind to do its work, formulating new electro-chemical passageways.

Dynamic Listening leaders empower their subordinates by trusting them to solve problems. They say, in effect, *“I’m here to support you, but I want you to solve these problems for yourself.”*

Dynamic Listeners tend to function better in personal relationships because Dynamic Listening is more likely to foster intimacy. Additionally, Dynamic Listening is a valuable parenting skill, especially with teens as they individuate themselves from fiduciary structures.

In one of my coaching interactions, an executive client of mine shared a particularly difficult issue. Once I bypassed the arrogance of feeling obligated to fix it for her, I said, “I’m not going to try to solve your problem. I’m just going to listen to you and be with you while you’re ‘in it’ so you’re not alone.” She later told me that this act of Dynamic Listening had been supremely helpful, and she did, in fact, figure out how to solve the problem herself.

Relative Listening is an improvement over Prescriptive Listening, or at least it can be. You’re practicing Relative Listening when you respond to the other’s issue, predicament, or emotional wound by relating a story of your own. For example, *“I know what you’re going through. I experienced that in the past, and I know it can be extremely difficult.”*

The positive manifestation of Relative Listening alleviates isolation and shame. We call it “Mitigation” Relative Listening, and it effectively says, *“You’re not alone, and there’s nothing wrong with you for struggling with this or feeling this way.”* Mitigation Relative Listening, therefore, tends to be helpful.

The negative manifestation of Relative Listening is when it turns to dominance. That’s when the Relative Listener steals the spotlight, and the other is required to do the listening. “Domination” Relative Listening is almost never productive when listening to someone who comes to you for support.

Prescriptive Listening is the least productive of the three levels of listening, typically, because Prescriptive Listening assumes the other is insufficient in some way. Prescriptive listeners hear an issue, a predicament, or an emotional wound and immediately shift into solution prescribing.

Effectively, Prescriptive Listening says, *“The solution to what troubles you is easy, and you are inadequate for not being able to see it.”* Other people’s problems will always be easier to see because they are not your problems. Thus, Prescriptive Listening is often the product of presumption, emotional clumsiness, and/or arrogance.

Of course, Prescriptive Listening has its place. I cut my teeth as a professional listener in a boys’ prison. As a professional listener to inmates, when they shared their struggles, Prescription Listening was often appropriate and sometimes productive. Instruction requires Prescriptive Listening, obviously, and there are other similar situations that require it.

However, if you’ve ever heard some version of, *“I just want you to listen, and I don’t want you to fix it for me or tell me what to do,”* you were probably over-Prescriptive Listening. If you find that the people around you are starting to avoid sharing their struggles with you, it’s possible that you’re a Prescriptive Listener.

If you find yourself trying to keep your mouth shut as you are simultaneously formulating advice in your head, it’s possible that you practice “Silent” Prescriptive Listening.

Prescriptive Listeners tend to be experts at everyone’s problems but their own. Leaders who overuse Prescriptive-Listening tend to generate dependency among their employees because they do everybody’s thinking for them. Employees get fewer opportunities to learn from mistakes and earn successes. Prescriptive listeners’ relationships often suffer because they make little room for the experience of others.

Six Stages in the Listening Process

They are hearing, attending, understanding, remembering, evaluating, and responding. These stages occur in sequence, but they generally performed with little awareness an often rapid succession.

Stage 1 : Hearing: It refers to the response caused by sound waves stimulating the sensory receptors of the ear; it is physical response; hearing is perception of sound waves; you must hear to listen, but you need not listen to hear (perception necessary for listening depends on attention)

Stage 2 : Attention: Brain screens stimuli and permits only a select few to come into focus-these selective perception is known as attention, an important requirement for effective listening; strong stimuli like bright lights, sudden noise...are attention getters; attention to more commonplace or less striking stimuli requires special effort; postural adjustments are aided by physical changes in sensory receptor organs; receptor adjustments might include tensing of the ear’s tympanic muscle for better response to weak sounds

Stage 3 : Understanding: To understand symbols we have seen and heard, we must analyze the meaning of the stimuli we have perceived; symbolic stimuli are not only words but also sounds like applause... and sights like blue uniform...that have symbolic meanings as well; the meanings attached to these symbols are a function of our past associations and of the context

in which the symbols occur; for successful interpersonal communication, the listener must understand the intended meaning and the context assumed by the sender.

Stage 4 : Remembering: It is important listening process because it means that an individual has not only received and interpreted a message but has also added it to the mind's storage bank; but just as our attention is selective, so too is our memory- what is remembered may be quite different from what was originally seen or heard.

Stage 5 : Evaluating: It is a stage in which active listeners participate; it is at these point that the active listener weighs evidence, sorts fact from opinion, and determines the presence or absence of bias or prejudice in a message; the effective listener makes sure that he or she doesn't begin this activity too soon ; beginning this stage of the process before a message is completed requires that we no longer hear and attend to the incoming message-as a result, the listening process ceases

Stage 6 : Responding: This stage requires that the receiver complete the process through verbal and/or nonverbal feedback; because the speaker has no other way to determine if a message has been received, this stage becomes the only overt means by which the sender may determine the degree of success in transmitting the message.

Types of listening

Discriminative Listening

Discriminative listening begins at a very young age, possibly even before birth when a human is in the womb. Everyone is gifted with discriminative listening skills by birth, even when they don't even know how to understand words and sentences. Discriminative listening involves the tone of voice, verbal cues, and other changes in sound.

For example, babies can understand the intention of sentences before they understand the meaning of the words. If you talk to them with a happy and amused tone of voice, they will smile back at you. And when you talk to them with an angry and aggressive tone, they are more likely to cry and get scared.

Comprehensive Listening

Comprehensive listening is used to learn information by understanding what is being said. The listener needs to have appropriate vocabulary and language skills in order to engage in comprehensive listening. If two different people are listening to the same conversation, there is a high chance that both of them will understand the message differently.

For example, parents listen to their children when they tell them about their day at school. They understand their children by listening to them and provide feedback to strengthen their bond.

Informational Listening

Informational listening is used when you want to learn something and want to understand and retain the information being told. This type of listening involves a high level of concentration,

so you need to get highly engaged to understand the information that is new to you. You can become a better learner by harnessing the power of informational listening.

For example, when your teacher is teaching you a new concept in mathematics, you need to listen to her attentively and carefully in order to retain the information and formulas about the concept.

Critical Listening

Critical listening involves scrutinizing what is being said along with some sort of problem-solving or decision-making. It includes analyzing the information being received and aligning it with the existing information you have.

For example, when a sales executive has to handle an unusual and complex request from a customer, they need to use critical listening to analyze solutions.

Empathetic Listening

Empathetic listening involves understanding the feelings and emotions of the speaker. Empathetic listening is when you put yourself in the speaker's shoes and try to understand their feelings and emotions behind the words. It helps to deeply connect with the other person. This type of listening is more than showing compassion and feeling sorry for the speaker, it is about realizing and understanding the speaker's point of view.

For example, counsellors or therapists use empathetic listening to understand the root cause of their patients' negative emotions.

Selective Listening

Selective listening is a negative type of listening. When the listener is biased on the basis of preconceived ideas or emotionally difficult communication toward what they are hearing, it is known as selective listening. You are not able to understand the true context of the message that is being said as you have filtered out some of the information based on your existing perspectives.

Biased Listening

Biased listening is the type of listening where you only listen to things you want to hear and form opinions and judgments. A listener might misinterpret the information of the speaker based on a stereotype they have against them.

For example, there is a teacher who is biased towards a student named Rohan. The teacher asked a question from the whole class and asked Rohan and one other student to answer it. The other student answered the question in short, whereas Rohan started his answer with some basic explanation first and then the main answer, but the teacher didn't listen to him and punished him for the wrong answer.

Sympathetic Listening

Sympathetic listening is the type of listening skills in which you do not focus on the message that is spoken through words but on the feelings and emotions of the speaker. Sympathetic listening is used to provide support to the speaker so that they can feel heard and validated by your listening efforts. It is beneficial when you want to build a deeper relationship with someone in your life, and it helps you understand how they are feeling.

For example, your colleague is upset because of the work pressure and is not getting recognition for their work. They are upset and not even participating in conversations and team meetings at the office. You decide to talk to them and listen to what they have to say. In this case, you use sympathetic listening to understand and feel how frustrated and angry they are feeling. By doing this, they can feel heard, validated, and supported in hard situations like this.

Deep Listening

Deep listening is listening skills in which you hear more than the words of the speakers but also tap into the deeper meaning behind the message, unspoken needs, and feelings conveyed.

For example, when you listen to your loved ones, like family, friends, or spouse, you understand and feel the emotions of the words they say.

False Listening

When a person pretends to listen to the speaker but is not actually listening or comprehending the message, it is known as false listening.

For example, you hate a friend of yours who always brags about things, but you cannot ignore them because they might feel hurt and ignored. So, to avoid these consequences, you just pretend to listen to them.

Tips for Effective Listening Skills

Here are some tips to excel at listening skills and connect with people on a deeper level:

- **Maintaining Eye Contact:** Whenever listening to someone, try to maintain eye contact and face the speaker. It is a crucial part of any face-to-face conversation. Breaking eye contact in between conversations can be called good eye contact, whereas if you continuously keep eye contact, it can be considered as staring. You can look sideways at the right eye, then at the left eye of the speaker to maintain good eye contact.
- **Listen to the “Body Language”:** “Actions speak louder than words.” Learn to analyze the body language of the speaker to better understand the intentions and motive of the message. Body language involves facial expressions, tone of voice, and gestures.
- **Don’t Interrupt:** Imagine you are presenting a presentation and one of your team members keeps interrupting you for something. Will you like or hate that behavior? So, the moral is that interrupting someone while they are saying something can be frustrating, instead, if you want to correct something or add something, wait for them to finish first.

- **Don't Start Planning What to Say Next:** Don't be a multitasker while listening. You cannot listen and plan what you will say next. Listen to the speaker without judging or jumping to conclusions, and don't be hurried in replying to them.
- **Ask Follow-Up Questions:** Try to ask relevant questions about the topic to better understand the speaker's words. Questions like, "Did you mean that....", "If I am right, did you say that....", or "I think I didn't get your point...did you mean...."

Barriers to Effective Listening

Physical and Environmental Barriers

Physical and environmental barriers are the barriers that create hindrances to effectively listening to what is being said. This involves noise, obstructions, and distance. If your manager is presenting a presentation and many employees are talking loudly outside the meeting room, making you unable to listen to your manager, this noise is considered a physical and environmental barrier.

Emotional and Psychological Barriers

The mental noise that is influenced by our mood and energy is known as emotional and psychological barriers. These barriers make it difficult to concentrate on the listening process. The upset mood causes difficulty listening to someone. For example, strong negative emotions, self-pity, or sadness turn your focus inward and distract you from the words of the speaker.

Cultural Barriers

People with different backgrounds, whether religiously, ethnically, culturally, or otherwise, can face cultural barriers to effective listening skills. For example, two companies doing business together from two different countries that speak different languages.

Low Concentration

Lack of attention to the speaker's messages causes you to misunderstand the message of the speaker. You need to concentrate in order to decode the message in the right context. Low concentration arises due to various factors such as visual or auditory distractions, physical discomfort, noise, and a lack of interest.

Focusing on Style, Not Information

Distractions in a speech or presentation can sidetrack the attention of the listeners away from the message. These distractions can be accents, vocabulary, or the physical appearance of the speaker. If a speech is delivered in a way that you may perceive as rude, then you are more likely to not pay attention to the speaker's words.

Reading Skills

Reading is defined as the cognitive process of decoding symbols to determine a text's meaning. The symbols are the text itself, and the process of decoding requires that the reader quickly

match a symbol or combination of symbols (letter(s)) to a sound, and then recognize the patterns of sounds that create words. These words then convey meaning to the reader. Reading is an active process that requires both simple and complex components. The reader must have a base knowledge of the symbols that create the language, as well as a vocabulary in that language, and an understanding of the grammar rules. In addition, the reader will use higher-level processing to determine the meaning of the text and author purpose, among other things. These components can be categorized into three processes of reading:

- *Word recognition*: The ability to see a word and recognize its pronunciation and meaning without deliberate effort/thinking.
- *Comprehension*: The act of constructing meaning from the overall text.
- *Fluency*: The ability to read a text quickly and accurately, as though it were spoken.

Types of Reading

Skimming is a technique that allows you to quickly read through a text and pick out the main ideas. This is a useful skill when you need to get an overview of a text or when you're looking for specific information.

Scanning is a technique that allows you to quickly read through a text and find specific information. This is a useful skill when you need to find specific information in a text.

Intensive reading is a technique that allows you to read a text slowly and carefully in order to understand all the details and nuances. This is a useful skill when you need to understand a text in depth.

Extensive reading/Speed reading is a technique that allows you to read a text quickly. This is a useful skill when you need to read a lot of information in a short amount of time.

What is reading comprehension and why is it important?

Reading comprehension is the ability to read text, process it and understand its meaning. It relies on two, interconnected abilities: word reading (being able to decode the symbols on the page) and language comprehension (being able to understand the meaning of the words and sentences).

When we make sense of a text, however, we don't just remember the exact words and phrases we read. Rather, we form a mental model of what the text describes by integrating the sense of the words and sentences into a meaningful whole, like a film that plays in our head. Good comprehension is vital if reading is to have a purpose, if a reader is to engage with and learn from a text and, ultimately, if a reader is to enjoy what they're reading.

Good comprehension requires a range of different knowledge and skills:

- vocabulary and background knowledge
- integration and inference skills
- understanding language structure/connections
- knowledge and use of text structure
- comprehension monitoring.

What is “Read Between the Lines”?

To read between the lines, sometimes varied as to read in between the lines, is a common expression about interpreting meaning beyond what someone says or does on the surface. To read between the lines, sometimes varied as to read in between the lines, is a common expression about interpreting meaning beyond what someone says or does on the surface. And in fact, it’s an ideal phrase for people in the early English-learning stages—because it involves a metaphor of learning through reading.

What Is Critical Reading?

The critical reading definition describes the process as a form of language analysis to a certain extent, involving a deeper examination of the text, the ideas, themes, and claims presented. The critical reading meaning goes a lot deeper than that. Critical reading involves a higher level of involvement from a reader than recreational reading. The reader is supposed to apply certain theories and thought processes, and raise questions and the final result is better comprehension and enhanced clarity. As a process, this means that the reader should always keep an open mind, read slower than usual, pay extra attention, take notes, and try to put himself or herself in the shoes of the author’s target audience.

Critical reading plays an important role in the reader’s development and comes with a plethora of benefits. Even though reading simply for pleasure and as a pass-time activity is an incredibly rewarding activity, critical reading takes things to a new level. Here’s why critical reading is important.

1. Mental Development

One of the most obvious aspects we need to take into consideration when discussing the importance of critical reading is the effect it has on our minds. Like any complex mental task we take on, critical reading is an amazing workout for our brains. While reading is already known to have a beneficial effect on our brain, critical reading is actually an even better exercise. By getting more involved in the text, taking notes, and analyzing more aspects of the language and subtext, more areas of our brain are being activated compared to classical reading. The neuronal connections are being strengthened, new neural paths are built and our brains develop better and faster. Needless to say, mental development achieved through critical reading can be extremely valuable in many aspects of our lives.

2. Better Understanding of the Text

Somewhat obvious, reading critically has an immensely positive effect on how much, how well, and how quickly we understand what we read. While during regular reading quite a lot of skimming occurs, which eventually leads us to inevitably miss out on certain pieces of information we are forced to deduct later from context, critical reading means no stone is left unturned. Reading critically implies a level of involvement in the activity of reading that

doesn't allow us to skip any unknown words, or any connections to other events the author is making, which in turn means that any given sentence, paragraph, or section of the text cannot be considered read until the reader understands it 100%.

3. Critical Thinking Improvement

Critical thinking is an essential life skill, defined as one's ability to understand, synthesize, conceptualize, analyze, interpret, and evaluate information. What this means is that a critical thinker takes nothing at face value and filters all information through his or her own thought process. Critical reading is a powerful tool for developing the necessary mental attributes of a critical thinker. This type of reading is an essential mental exercise through which information read is analyzed and processed at a much deeper level. Any thought, idea, or concept expressed by the author needs to be observed, judged, and carefully analyzed while critically reading. The same mental process is involved in critical thinking, but that applies to all information received through any other channels, not only reading. Needless to say, being able to distinguish between real and fake news for example is absolutely essential nowadays. That is the power of critical thinking and critical reading is therefore a great means to an end.

4. Remembering More From What You Read

It's not unusual for us to forget many parts of what we read. After all, our memory is something we have little to no control over. Our brains normally decide, through processes we are not actively involved in, what information is worth keeping and what can be forgotten. The best we can do when it comes to our memory is nudge it in the right direction whenever we feel that we absolutely need to remember a certain piece of information. And even though it may sound odd, we do that using tricks. Tricks like repeating a name several times in order to remember it, writing down essential information, mnemonic devices, and many others have been proven effective.

Critical reading uses some of the same tactics: it is not unusual for a reader to go over the same paragraph several times before being completely sure all the information is understood, and a critical reader will often take notes in order to structure the gathered information in a more facile manner. As mentioned earlier, this process of analyzing the text to a deeper level gets more parts of our brain involved, which in turn tricks it into creating the neuronal connections that are required for remembering a lot more information than you would through regular reading.

5. Better Logical and Problem-Solving Skills

Like any mental exercise, critical reading has effects that go way beyond the obvious. While at first glance, it would seem logical for critical reading to have benefits that are strictly related to reading, speech, and text comprehension, things are quite different in reality. Given the strong connection to critical thinking and the way it improves this skill and what an effective brain exercise it is, the ramifications of the critical reading benefits extend over a much larger

spectrum: better decision making, a de-cluttered mind, crisper logic and even an ability to solve problems faster, better and with less effort.

Business English Vocabulary

Here are a few examples of business English terms for HR professionals.

Attrition

The voluntary exit of employees, such as through retirement, from an organization where their roles remain vacant.

Example: Attrition in the workforce has been steadily increasing due to the company's recent restructuring efforts.

Compensation / Pay

Compensation, also referred to as "remuneration" outside of the U.S. and Canada, encompasses all payments made to employees for their work during their tenure at an organization.

Example: The company offers competitive compensation packages to attract and retain top talent in the industry.

Employ / Hire

To provide a job to someone and compensate them for their labor.

Example: The company plans to employ several new graduates this year to support its expansion efforts

Dismiss / Fire

To dismiss a worker from their employment against their will.

Example: The company had to dismiss several employees due to budget cuts.

Job description / Job specification

A job description outlines the job title, location, objectives, and responsibilities, while a job specification lists the qualifications, experience, skills, education, and training necessary to fulfill job duties.

Example: Before applying for the position, candidates should carefully review the job description to ensure they understand the role's responsibilities and requirements.

Read more:

Here are a few examples of business English expressions for managers.

Quarter

In the business world, a "quarter" denotes a three-month period within the financial year.

Example: When analyzing financial reports, it's crucial to consider the performance of each quarter within the fiscal year to gain insights into trends and fluctuations.

Senior Management Team (SMT)

Most large companies have a Senior Management Team (SMT), comprising department heads and the CEO, responsible for key decisions affecting the entire organization.

Example: The Senior Management Team meets weekly to address critical issues and strategize company-wide initiatives.

Line manager

The line manager provides day-to-day guidance and support. If issues arise, employees typically consult their “line manager” first for resolution.

Example: Employees are encouraged to communicate any work-related concerns or difficulties with their line manager before escalating them to higher levels of management.

Corporate training

Corporate training refers to educational programs provided by companies to employees to improve their skills, knowledge, and competencies relevant to their roles.

Example: The company invested in corporate training programs to enhance employee performance and productivity across various departments.

Here are a few examples of business English vocabulary for marketers.**Branding**

Branding refers to the process of creating a unique identity and perception for a product, service, or organization in the minds of consumers.

Example: The company’s logo and slogan are key elements of its branding strategy, helping to differentiate its products in the market.

Persona

A persona is a detailed representation of a target audience segment based on demographics, behaviors, and preferences, used to tailor marketing strategies effectively.

Example: By developing detailed buyer personas, the marketing team gained valuable insights into their target audience’s preferences and behavior.

Content marketing

Content marketing involves creating and distributing valuable, relevant content to attract and engage a target audience, ultimately driving profitable customer action.

Example: The company regularly publishes blog posts, videos, and infographics as part of its content marketing strategy to educate and engage its audience.

Social media marketing

Social media marketing utilizes social media platforms to promote products or services, engage with audiences, and build brand awareness and loyalty.

Example: The brand’s social media marketing campaign went viral, resulting in a significant increase in followers and engagement across platforms.

PPC

PPC (Pay-Per-Click) is an online advertising model where advertisers pay a fee each time their ad is clicked, typically used in search engine advertising to drive targeted traffic to websites.

Example: The company allocated a portion of its marketing budget to PPC advertising to drive targeted traffic to its website and increase conversions.

Read more:

Here are a few examples of business English terminology for IT professionals.

Application

A software program designed to perform specific tasks or functions on electronic devices such as computers or smart phones.

Example: developing a mobile application that helps users track their daily fitness activities.

Bug

An error or flaw in a software program that causes it to behave unexpectedly or produce incorrect results.

Example: After hours of debugging, we finally found and fixed the bug that was causing the software to crash.

Database

A structured collection of data organized and stored in a computer system, typically used for efficient retrieval and manipulation of information.

Example: We need to optimize the database queries for faster retrieval of information.

Software

A set of instructions or programs that control the operation of computers and enable them to perform various tasks, ranging from basic functions to complex applications.

Example: The software used by the engineering team streamlines the design process, increasing productivity and accuracy in their projects.

Specifications

Detailed descriptions or requirements outlining the features, functionalities, and performance characteristics of a product or system.

Example: The specifications for the new smart phone outline features such as a high-resolution display, dual-camera setup, and fast-charging capability.